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Downham Market Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR 1948.

DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

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Downham Market Urban District Council

Members of the Public Health Committee

Mr. C. E. Bowman, *Chairman.*

Mr. H. Alflatt	Mr. E. P. English
Mr. C. F. Bennett	Mr. J. Hinton
Mrs. G. B. E. Bennett	Mr. W. Revell
Mr. A. E. Boothby	Mr. E. A. Walker

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Dr. C. T. Darwent, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Also holds the appointments of :—

Asst. County Medical Officer of Health.

Asst. County School Medical Officer.

Medical Officer of Health to Downham Rural District.

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District.

SANITARY INSPECTOR & SURVEYOR.

Jas. Hinchliffe, M.Inst. M. & Cty.E., A.R.S.I.

STOKE FERRY,
June, 1949.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present for your consideration the Annual Report of the Health and sanitary circumstances of the District for the year ending the 31st December, 1948.

The vital statistics for the year under review may be considered most satisfactory, The birth rate shows a slight increase, and the death rate a decrease. The number of cases of Infectious diseases (37) notified during the year shows a decrease of nine over the previous year, although 29 cases of Whooping Cough are included in the above total.

It is gratifying to learn that NO cases of Diphtheria occurred in the District during the year and only one NEW case of Tuberculosis was notified.

In the field of applied sanitation — many problems remain to be dealt with, such as housing, sewerage and water supplies. These difficulties are being gradually overcome.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the help afforded me in my duties by the members of the Council and the Executive Officers.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

C. T. DARWENT,

Medical Officer of Health

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1948.

Area (in acres) ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1003
Population, 1931 Census	....	....	....	....	....	....	2465
Population, 1948 ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2570
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1931....	750	approx.					
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1948....	....	....	....	....	....	....	865
Rateable Value, 1948 ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	£14,239
Product of a Penny Rate, 1948 ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	£52

LIVE BIRTHS.

	Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	England & Wales	Administrative County
Legitimate	50	27	23			
Illegitimate	2	1	1			
	52	28	24	20.2	17.9	17.41

STILL BIRTHS (Rate per 1,000 (Live and Still Births)).

	Total	Male	Female	Downham	Administrative County
Legitimate	1		1		
Illegitimate	—	—	—		
	1	—	1	19.2	24.6

DEATHS (all causes).

	Total	Male	Female	Downham Market	Rate England & Wales	Administrative County
	35	19	16	13.6	10.8	11.2

DEATHS from Puerperal Cause.

Puerperal and post-abortive Sepsis	....	....	....	Nil.
Other puerperal causes	....	....	....	Nil.

INFANT MORTALITY (rate per 1,000 live births).

	Total	Male	Female	Rate	Rate A.D.C.
Legitimate	4	1	3		
Illegitimate	—	—	—		
	4	1	3	76.9	31.61

DEATHS FROM

Cancer (all ages) ....	....	....	....	....	....	3
Measles (all ages) ....	....	....	....	....	....	Nil.
Whooping Cough (all ages)	....	....	....	....	....	Nil.
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ....	....	....	....	....	....	1

SECTION A.

Natural and Social Conditions.

Area (acres)	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1003
Population, 1948	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2570

(Registrar-General figure)

DEATHS. The total number of deaths assigned to the district by the Registrar-General after adjustment for inward and outward transfers, was 35, compared with 41 for 1947.

BIRTHS. The number of live births assigned to the district was 52, compared with 48 in 1947. The birth rate is thus increased and is equal to 20.2 per 1,000 of the population.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There were NO maternal deaths during 1948, which is most gratifying.

STILL BIRTHS. One still birth was recorded during the year, showing a marked decrease in the percentage.

INFANT MORTALITY. Four infants under 1 year of age died during the year under review, showing an increase.

Deaths under 1 year per 1,000 live births:

Downham Market Urban	....	77.0
England and Wales	....	—
Administrative County ...	....	31.61

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Public Health Emergency Laboratory, Bowthorpe Road, Norwich.

DIPHTHERIA ANTI-TOXIN.

In accordance with the provisions of the Diphtheria (outside London) Order, 1910 — a supply of Anti-Toxin is always available free of charge from the Sanitary Inspector, Town Hall Annexe, for use by Medical Practitioners in the town.

Diphtheria Immunisation Statistics, 1948.

	0 — 4 years	5 — 14 years
Child Population	592 244	348
Total Immunised	432 = 73%.	

In the following age groups up to 31st December, 1948:—

1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5 to 9 yrs.	10 to 14 yrs.
20	24	36	63	131	158 = 432.

AMBULANCE SERVICE.

The District is admirably served in this respect by the British Red Cross Society, who capably handled all non-infectious cases during 1948. The Ambulance made 302 journeys during the year.

HOSPITAL.

The District is served by two Hospitals:—

- (a) The West Norfolk and King's Lynn General Hospital.
- (b) The Downham Public Assistance Institution.

ACCOMMODATION FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES:—

County Isolation Hospital, East Dereham,

SECTION C.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Water Supply in Downham Market is from the mains of the Wisbech Water Works Co., who derive their water from deep wells at Marham. Quite a number of properties, however, in various parts of the town, are not connected to the mains, and these are dependant for their supplies from shallow wells. These should be eliminated as quickly as possible. Extensions of water mains were made during the year to serve Bennett Street, Windsor Street and Porter Street, and several houses had new connections to the water mains during the year. No samples of water for analysis were taken during the year under review.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The greater part of the town is sewered, but in the case of the old brick sewers of which there is a considerable length, these are very old and in some cases in a very defective and dangerous condition. These will have to be replaced with stoneware sewers at no very distant date.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Dry refuse is collected weekly throughout the town and tipped on land adjoining the Railway Road. The tip is well controlled and fairly free from vermin.

DISINFECTION.

This is carried out when required by the Council's workmen.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Public Cleansing and Scavenging is carried out by the Council's workmen and the Streets on the whole are kept very tidy.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No case of infestation by Bed Bugs was reported during the year.

SECTION D.

1. INSPECTIONS DURING THE YEAR.

(a) Total number of houses inspected for defects	....	31
(b) Number of inspections for the purpose	.... ....	54
(c) Number of houses found not to be in all respects fit for habitation	.... .... .... .... .... ....	20

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal notices	20
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3.	Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—						
	(a)	Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, 16 Housing Act, 1936					Nil.
	(b)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts					Nil.
4.	Number of new Houses built during 1948:—						
	(a)	Under Housing Acts by Local Authority:					
		40 houses were completed by the Council on the Retreat Estate by December 31st, 1948, and all were occupied					40
	(b)	By Private enterprise					2
	Total number of Houses owned by the Urban Council					....	106

SECTION E.

MILK SUPPLY.

There are two producer-retailers and three retailers of milk on the Register of Cowkeepers and Dairymen. One of the producer-retailers is also licensed for the production of Tuberculin Tested Milk. A large percentage of the milk distributed in the town is in bottles.

MEAT INSPECTION.

The whole of the meat sold in the town is brought from the Ministry's Slaughter-house at King's Lynn. Generally speaking, the quality appears to be quite as good as that sold in other parts of the country. Seventy pounds of meat was voluntarily surrendered as unfit for food during the year.

FOOD INSPECTION.

No adulteration of any foodstuffs was detected during the year. 150 tins and packets of various kinds of foodstuffs were voluntarily surrendered as unfit for food during the year.

SECTION F.

SMALL POX. Nil.

SCARLET FEVER. Two cases of scarlet fever were notified during the year. One case was removed to hospital.

DIPHTHERIA. No case was notified during 1948.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

This is carried out by Medical Practitioners of the District either at their surgeries or at the home of the child. Alum precipitated toxoid (A.P.T.) and Toxoid Anti-toxin Floccules (T.A.F.) can be obtained free of charge from the Health Department for use in the District.

PNEUMONIA. Only one case was notified during the year.

MEASLES. Four cases were notified, as against 29 in the previous year. No deaths were assigned to this disease.

WHOOPING COUGH. Twenty-nine cases were notified, as against 15 in the previous year.

SECTION G.
STATISTICAL TABLES, 1948.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Table No. 1.

Causes of Death.	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	—	—	Nil.
2. Cerebro spinal fever	—	—	Nil.
3. Scarlet fever	—	—	Nil.
4. Whooping cough	—	—	Nil.
5. Diphtheria	—	—	Nil.
6. Tuberculosis of respiratory system....	—	—	Nil.
7. Other forms of tuberculosis	—	—	Nil.
8. Syphilitic diseases	—	—	Nil.
9. Influenza	—	—	Nil.
10. Measles	—	—	Nil.
11. Acute polio-myelitis and polio encephalitis	—	—	Nil.
12. Acute infective encephalitis....	—	—	Nil.
13. Cancer of the buccal cavity & oesophagus (m)	1	2	3
uterus (f)	—	—	Nil.
14. Cancer of stomach and duodenum	—	—	Nil.
15. Cancer of breast	—	—	Nil.
16. Cancer of all other sites	1	1	2
17. Diabetes	—	—	Nil.
18. Intra-cranial vascular lesions	2	5	7
19. Heart disease	3	3	6
20. Other diseases of circulatory system	2	1	3
21. Bronchitis	1	—	1
22. Pneumonia	1	1	2
23. Other respiratory diseases	—	1	1
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	—	—	Nil.
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years	1	—	1
26. Appendicitis	—	—	Nil.
27. Other digestive diseases	—	—	Nil.
28. Nephritis	1	—	1
29. Puerperal and post abortive sepsis	—	—	Nil.
30. Other maternal causes	—	—	Nil.
31. Premature birth	1	—	1
32. Congenital malformations, birth injury and infantile diseases	—	2	2
33. Suicide	—	—	Nil.
34. Road traffic accidents	1	—	1
35. Other violent causes....	—	—	Nil.
36. All other causes	4	—	4
All causes	19	16	35

CAUSES OF DEATH OF CHILDREN UNDER ONE YEAR, 1948.

Table No. 2.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Age in Weeks

	—1		—2		—13		—14		5—52	Total
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
I. Congenital Malformations										
II. Diseases of Early Infancy										
(a) Congenital Debility										
(b) Premature Birth									1	1
(c) Injury at Birth										
(d) Atelectasis										
(e) Others									2	2
III. Diseases of Respiratory System										
IV. Diseases of Nervous System										
V. Diseases of Digestive System									1	1
VI. Tuberculosis Disease										
VII. Infectious Disease										
VIII. Syphilis										
IX. Overlaying										
X. Violence										
XI. All other Causes										
	1	2							1	4

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Table No. 3.

Notification in Age Groups.

Disease.	0—1	1 & 2	2 & 3	3 & 4	4 & 5	5 & 10	10 & 15	15 & 20	20 & 35	35 & 45	45 & 65	65 & over	Total	Removed to Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever					1					1			2	1	
Diphtheria															
Measles		1	1	1	1								4		
Whooping Cough	4	9	2	3	11								29		
Erysipelas					1								1		
Pneumonia			1										1		
Puerperal Pyrexia															
Enteric Fever															
Infective Jaundice															
Acute Poliomyelitis															
Total	4	10	4	4	14					1			37	1	

MONTHLY INCIDENT OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES, 1948.
(other than Tuberculosis) Table No. 4.

Disease.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
—0Scarlet Fever ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
—0Measles 	4	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
—0Whooping Cough	1	....	2	....	....	....	....	1	7	2	14	2	29
—0Pneumonia ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	1
—0Erysipelas ....	....	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1
—0Puerperal Pyrexia ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
—0Enteric Fever ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
—0Infective Jaundice ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
—0Acute Polio-Myelitis ....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Totals	5	—	3	—	—	—	1	2	7	2	15	2	37

NEW CASES AND DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS, 1948.

Table No. 5.

NEW CASES.					DEATHS.			
Age in	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
Years	Male.	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
—1								
—5								
—15		1						
—25								
—35								
—45								
—55								
—65								
65 & over								
Totals	Nil.	1	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.



